

Preview

“Europe in the Renaissance. Metamorphoses 1400–1600.”

01.08.2016–27.11.2016

On 1 August 2016 the new wing of the National Museum Zurich will be inaugurated. The first event to be held in the new rooms for special exhibitions will tell the story of the Renaissance, an era that gave birth to some of the most important advances in human history: the invention of the printing press using movable letters, the discovery of an unknown continent and the formulation of a new view of the earth and its place in the universe. The Renaissance was a time when people sought to solve the riddles of nature; they experimented with alchemy, set out to develop a new medical science, conceived a new vision of mankind and pursued an ideal of beauty oriented on antiquity in their paintings, architecture, sculpture and literature.

All these discoveries and creations would have been unimaginable without a broad and dynamic exchange of ideas. The Renaissance was an era of dialogue, transformation and cultural interaction over great distances and time.

“Europe in the Renaissance. Metamorphoses 1400–1600.“ examines these complex cultural exchange processes and presents this dynamic era as a pan-European phenomenon. It shows how the culture of the Renaissance spread out from Italy and adapted in the process. Works of art, books and scientific instruments offer insight into how certain ideas and motifs migrated across the continent and became transformed along the way as they were adapted to local styles and needs. Artworks, learned writings and instruments and objects of everyday life are drawn upon as historical sources.

The exhibition is staged impressively in the new museum wing. Works from the collections of the Swiss National Museum and numerous other Swiss museums and institutions are complemented by important objects on international loan, including artworks from the Frick Collection in New York, the National Gallery in London and the Germanisches Nationalmuseum in Nuremberg and documents from leading libraries and archives such as the Bibliothèque nationale de France in Paris, the Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana in Florence and the Bayerische Staatsbibliothek in Munich, which all come together to make this a fascinating and unique exhibition.

A scientific advisory board made up of professors and curators from Switzerland, Europe and the USA supervised the composition of the exhibition narrative. A publication incorporating numerous illustrations and texts by renowned authors encourages visitors to the exhibition to explore the different manifestations of the Renaissance in their manifold facets.

Press conference

Friday, 29 July 2016 | 10 a.m.

“Europe in the Renaissance. Metamorphoses 1400–1600.” is the special exhibition inaugurating the exhibition rooms of the new wing of the National Museum Zurich.

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Pictures and captions

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Albrecht Dürer (1471–1528), Portrait of Erasmus von Rotterdam, Nuremberg (preliminary studies for the work were done in Brussels), 1526. Copper engraving, 24.7 x 19.2 cm. Collection of Prints and Drawings, Swiss Federal Institute of Technology, Zurich, inv. no. 12877.



Hans Holbein the Younger, The Madonna of Mayor Jacob Meyer zum Hasen, 1525/26 and 1528. Oil on coniferous wood, 146.5 x 102 cm. Würth Collection, inv. no. 14910. Photo: Philipp Schönborn.



Francesco Laurana, Bust of Beatrice of Aragón, Naples, ca. 1474–75. Marble. The Frick Collection, New York, Bequest of John D. Rockefeller, Jr., 1961.



Tiziano Vecellio, known as Titian (1488/1490–1576), Portrait of Antoine Perrenot de Granvelle, 1548. Oil on canvas, 111.3 x 88.3 cm. The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, Kansas City, Missouri. Purchase: William Rockhill Nelson Trust, inv. no. 30-15.



Tobias Stimmer (1539–1584), Self-portrait, ca. 1563.
Chalk, Indian ink and watercolour on paper, 19.7 x 15 cm.
Peyer Tobias Stimmer Foundation, Museum zu
Allerheiligen, Schaffhausen, inv. no. B5924.



Jost Bürigi (1552–1632), celestial globe (“Bürigi globe”),
Kassel, 1594. Brass, gold-plated, height 25.5 cm, diameter
of globe 14.2 cm. Swiss National Museum, Zurich, inv. no.
LM-59000.1-2.



Hieronymus Hopper, Sultan Suleyman I, 1530–40 (?),
Kunstsammlungen und Museen Augsburg, Collection of
Prints and Drawings, inv. no. G 11981.



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